

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VT, US, XT, VN, VS, PN

SUBJECT: AUDIENCE WITH POPE PAUL VI (HELD AT VATICAN SUGGESTION)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LODGE

PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR GENERAL HAIG

1. DRAWING ON SCOWCROFT BRIEFING AND SECRETARY'S SEPT 26 PRESS CONFERENCE, I BRIEFED THE POPE ON OUR HOPES FOR OUR RELATIONS WITH EUROPE.

2. THE POPE REACTED WITH KEEN INTEREST, SAYING IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES TO BE TOGETHER AND THAT THE "EUROPEAN VOICE SHOULD BE MELTED WITH THE AMERICAN VOICE". FOR THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE TO COLLABORATE WAS THE BEST HOPE FOR CIVILIZATION. HE LOOKS AT THIS EFFORT WITH THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY. HE IS GLAD THAT THE PRESIDENT IS "HEADING SUCH AN IMPORTANT INITIATIVE". HE RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHEN THE PRESIDENT WOULD COME TO EUROPE AND OPINED THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO GET EVERYTHING READY FOR A TRIP THIS YEAR. HE THOUGHT THAT THE PREPARATORY WORK WAS UTTERLY VITAL AS THERE WERE MANY DIFFICULTIES. IT IS ONE THING TO HAVE SOME SORT OF EUROPEAN UNION AND IT WAS ANOTHER THING TO HAVE A GENUINE EUROPEAN IDENTITY. THE EUROPEANS ARE SET IN THEIR OLD WAYS. YOUTH IS THE BEST HOPE FOR CHANGE SINCE THE YOUNG DO NOT LOOK AT THE WORLD THE WAY THE OLDER PEOPLE DO. OLD PEOPLE ARE PATRIOTIC, ESPECIALLY IN FRANCE. TO DO ALL THESE GREAT THINGS WILL BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE "MAN IS SECRET

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FRAGILE". BUT WE MUST TRY AND NOT BE PESSIMISTIC.

3. HE SPOKE ABOUT A NUMBER OF OTHER THINGS: THE MONETARY CRISIS HAD CAUSED EUROPE TO SUFFER. HE HOPED THAT AMERICA WOULD

CONTINUE TO BE YOUNG IN SPIRIT AND TO BE WHAT IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN -- THE LAND OF LIBERTY. AMERICA HAD ALWAYS BEEN ONE COUNTRY, WITH A TWO PARTY SYSTEM WHICH DID NOT BASICALLY DIVIDE THE NATION: IT MUST BE ONE COUNTRY IN THE FUTURE. HE SAID HE FOLLOWED THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN THE U.S. AND WAS PREOCCUPIED --NOT TO SAY DISTURBED -- BY THE SUPREME COURT DECISION ON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND ON DIVORCE (I PRESUME HE MENT ABORTION). HE APPRECIATED WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAD SAID ABOUT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS. HE CONTINUED TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE BASIC GOODNESS OF AMERICA AND IN AMERICA'S HUMANITY.

4. HE WANTED TO TELL ME OF TWO MATTERS WHICH HAD JUST RECENTLY BEEN CALLED TO HIS ATTENTION:

A. THE FIRST WAS A LAMENTATION CONCERNING THE TREMENDOUS MILITARY ACTIVITY OF NORTH VIETNAM WHICH, HE WAS ADVISED, WAS BEGINNING TO PRESENT A VERY SERIOUS THREAT TO SOUTH VIETNAM.

B. YESTERDAY HE RECEIVED GEN. OMAR TORRIJOS HERRERA, THE PANAMANIAN CHIEF OF STATE WHO SPOKE WITH GREAT FEELING ABOUT THE FACT THAT 70 YEARS HAD GONE BY AND STILL PANAMA HAS OBTAINED NOTHING FROM THE U.S. "THE YOUTH IN PANAMA HE SAID, CANNOT STAND IT ANY LONGER" THE POPE EXPLAINED TO ME THAT HE TOOK NO SIDES ON WHAT THE PANAMANIA CHIEF OF STATE SAID AND DOES NOT PASS ON THE MERITS,BUT WANTED TO TELL ME ABOUT IT.

5. HE ASKED ME WHETHER I HAD ANY GOOD ADVICE FROM HIM AND FOR THE HOLY SEE. I SAID THAT I HAD BEEN MUCH IMPRESSED IN THE COURSE OF MY VISITS WITH THE HIGH CALIBRE OF MEN WHO WORK AT THE VATICAN. WITH MEN OF SUCH INTELLIGENCE AND DEVOTION IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELD WOULD EVER GO UNNOTICED. THE POPE SAID HE WANTED TO HELP AND DO HIS DUTY, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE NEW INITIATIVE CONCERNING EUROPE OF WHICH I HAD SPOKEN.

6. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING I SAID THE PRESIDENT SENT HIM HIS BEST WISHES. HE ASKED ME PLEASE TO SAY TO THE PRESIDENT
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THAT "I APPRECIATED VERY MUCH" THE PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTFULNESS. WHEN I LEFT I WISHED HIM GOOD HEALTH AND HE LAUGHED AND SAID, "OH, OLD AGE*" HE IMPRESSED ME AS BEING MENTALLY AS LIVELY AS EVER.

7. I PRESENTED THE MOON ROCK AND THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. HE WAS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN IT AND VERY GRATEFUL. HE INTENDS TO PUT IT INTO A SPECIAL MUSEUM HAVING TO DO WITH GEOLOGY AT CASTELGONDOLFO. VOLPE

SECRET

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